Auction System for Higher class tickets

698. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are considering introduction of auction system for higher class tickets with a minimum bid of Re.1.00 in an attempt to increase occupancy rate during off-season;

(b) if so, the details of the plan worked out; and

(c) whether more than 70 per cent of seats/berths in Rajdhani/Shatabdi trains go vacant during off-season?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) There is no such proposal under consideration.

(c) The occupancy of all trains including Rajdhani/Shatabdi Express varies from train to train. In some trains there is waiting list almost through out the year, whereas in some trains accommodation is available even during peak rush periods. However, to ensure optimum utilization of available accommodation, a scheme for upgrading full fare paying passengers to the next higher class against the vacant available accommodation in the class has been extended to all Mail/Express trains having sleeping accommodation w.e.f. 24-02-2006.

New Railway Tracks in Maharashtra

699. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of new railway tracks added in Maharashtra during Ninth and Tenth Five Year Plans, so far indicating their length also;

(b) the length and details of the railway tracks replaced and upgraded to broad gauge during the period; and

(c) the length of new railway lines to be added and replaced in Maharashtra during rest of Tenth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The details of new lines added in Maharashtra during the 9th & 10th Plan Period are as under:

(i) Panvel-Karjat (28 Kilometre)

(ii) Amravati-Chandurbazar (44 Kilometre)

(b) The details of lines converted to broad gauge in Maharashtra during 9th & 10th Plan are as under:

Section falling fully/partly in Maharashtra		Kms falling in Maharashtra
(i)	Solapur-Hotgi-Bijapur (Part)	56 Kms
(ii)	Nagbhir-Chandafort-Ballarshah	122 Kms
(iii)	Pandharpur-Kurduwadi & Latur-Latur Road	94 Kms
(iv)	Mudkhed-Dharmabad-Nizamabad	62 Kms
(v)	Adilabad-Kinwat (Part)	15 Kms
(vi)	Gondia-Balaghat (Part)	24 Kms

(c) No section is targeted for completion during 2005-06. Target for 2006-07 would be known only when the Railway Budget 2006-07 is presented in the Parliament.

Air-Condition facilities to Sleeper Class passengers

700. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to provide air-condition facilities to the rail passengers who travels in sleeper class by charging very nominal sum;

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when it would be started; and

(c) how much of approximate difference cost would be borne by the Railways between sleeper class coach and 3rd AC coach?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) With a view to optimize the utilization of available accommodation in train, a scheme to upgrade full fare paying passengers to the next higher class against the available vacant accommodation has since been extended to all Mail/Express trains having sleeping